

Beagle Meets Amitabha!

Pet Beagle dying of old age ascends into Amitabha's Western Pure Land after a day and night of continuous supportive chanting.

By Brian Chung

On the morning of August 6th, at 7:45 AM, my devout Buddhist aunt's beloved pet Beagle of 12 years (she named him Micky) **attained Pure Land rebirth after five days of supportive chanting—with the**

chanting for the last day and night being

continuous. Miraculously, all of the signs of Pure Land rebirth were present: The body remained soft, clean and supple for many hours after breathing stopped, and the various symptoms and pains (such as coughing up blood and diarrhea) of age-related renal failure mentioned by the veterinarian never manifested. Clearly, this was due to Amita Buddha's inconceivable merit and compassionate blessings.

On the day before his passing (August 5th), Micky walked into my aunt's room just before sunrise and waited calmly for her to recite Amita Buddha's name. She sensed that his end was nigh and quickly put a necklace with an aurulent image of Amitabha on him, and reminded Micky not be afraid if Amitabha appeared to welcome him. Thereafter, she recited Amitabha unceasingly and without pause, continuing even after he peacefully drew his last breath the next day.

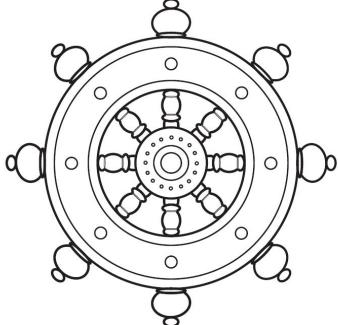
Just before his moment of death, Micky even got up to visit each room of the apartment one last time and approached every member of the family. In many recorded cases of rebirth in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, those about to be reborn were known to have visited their friends and families just before they left with Amitabha. They all foreknew the exact time of their last moment. Thus, Micky's sudden last farewells can only be proof that he too foreknew.

Moreover, when Micky's body was placed into a crate for transport to the pet funeral home, my aunt's cats (who are usually keen to jump into any box) willingly remained solemn and respectful.



After cremation, Micky's ashes were buried under a tree.

Micky's Pure Land rebirth is an epitome of the Buddha's promises in the following sutra verses:



“...He (Amitabha) is also the Light of Wisdom, Everlasting Light, Light of Purity, Joyous Light, Light of Relief, Light of Refuge, Light Surpassing the Twain of Sunlight and Moonglow, and the Inconceivable Light. Such wondrous Light of his shines ever so brightly across all the worlds of the ten directions without exception.”

“Any sentient being that perceives this Light will see their defilements wither and their virtues bloom. Their hearts will be calm and their bodies supple. If they are amongst the three woeful states of existence, they will find peace and be liberated upon their deaths. All beings who abide by the augustly luminous and meritorious Dharma ; single-mindedly hear Amitabha’s name chanted through night and day without cease, shall ascend into the Pure Land in accordance with their will.”

-Chapter 12, The Buddha Speaks the Mahayana, Infinite Life, Adornment, Purity, Impartiality, and Enlightenment Sutra

Thus, the wondrous benefits of supportive chanting cannot be ignored. If we can sincerely encourage our dying pets to seek the Western Pure Land and help them become mindful of Amitabha's meritorious name during their moment of death, the causes and conditions of Pure Land rebirth can align. Thereafter, our beloved and cherished pets will be forever freed from the sufferings of the Samsara. They become Enlightened Bodhisattvas of the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Supportive Chanting Guidelines for Pet Owners

- When it becomes clear that your pet is on the verge of death, bring it home from the veterinarian. Make it as comfortable as possible.
- Make sure that it will not be disturbed. Moreover, remain solemn and well composed as overt expressions of grief will generate thoughts of emotion and attachments. If other pets disturb or agitate it, keep them away. This is very important as the final thoughts of a sentient being determines its next rebirth. If the final thoughts are rooted in emotion, the next rebirth will likely be negative. However, if the final thoughts are mindful of Amita Buddha, then even if Pure Land rebirth is not achieved, a superior rebirth within the Samsara is still assured. For instance, according to the *Buddha Speaks the Mahayana, Infinite Life, Adornment, Purity, Impartiality, and Enlightenment Sutra*:



My aunt's cats were all solemn and respectful during Micky's last hours.

Sutra Vows 25-27: The Vows of Good Karma and Virtue

"When I attain Unsurpassed Bodhi, sentient beings of the ten quarters who are inspired by my name to sincerely cultivate the Bodhisattva Way shall be respected by both men and devas. Moreover, sentient beings who merely hear my name will be reborn as virtuous aristocrats possessing wealth, knowledge and auctoritas. Their bodies will be healthy and complete. Lastly, they will enjoy cultivating the highest Dharma. Until these vows are fulfilled, may I never attain Unsurpassed Bodhi."

- Show it an image of Amitabha (one is included on the last page for your convenience) ; exhort it to be mindful of Amitabha and to resolve to leave this world with him to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. Remind it not to be afraid and that its Pure Land rebirth is your greatest wish. Afterwards, recite the **Lotus Lagoon Assembly Prayer** (蓮池讚) once :

There upon the Lotus Lagoon Assembly, Amita Tathagata sits atop the lofty Lotus Dais—flanked by Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta—inviting you to ascend the golden steps while pronouncing great vows ; resolute in leaving all defilements and dusts forever behind.

- Recite **Amitabha** or **Amita Buddha** continuously until a few hours after breathing has stopped. Keep a large glass of water nearby in case you become thirsty while reciting. If other family members are willing to recite, establish a shift system.
- After you are done, dedicate the merit from the supportive chanting towards its Pure Land rebirth. This can be done with a simple and sincere statement in front of a Buddha image.

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*Amitabha's aurulent stature and splendorous appearance,
Shines forth augustly ; marvelous without peer.*

*His fair brows wreath five Sumeru peaks,
Purple eyes as bright and clear as the Four Great Seas.*

*From his luminous halo arise Buddhas countless,
And a host of Bodhisattvas vast and boundless.
His 48 Great Vows redeem beings of any rank,
Ferrying them in ennead orders to the other bank.*